

INVENTORY OF MATERIALS

Counties

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Contents: Family complete account of Edray District, Pocahontas County. Gives location, boundaries, surface, drainage, first settlers, description of first mills, school, post office; early churches & ministers; story of massacre of Drennen family.

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Reba & Seager
McNeill
Drennen's Search

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History

Edray district lies in the western part of the county, is bounded on the north by Randolph County; northeast by Greenbank District; east by Huntersville district; south by Little levels District and west by Webster County. The surface is rough and mountainous. In the north are the Middle Mountains and southern continuations of the Elk and Cheat Mountains; in the center are the Black Mountains and in the east and southeast rise the lofty peaks of Buckley, Marlins and Brushy ranges.

The principal drainage is to the west with the exceptions of Swago Creek, Stony Creek and one or two other small streams which flow east and fall into the Greenbrier River. All the streams flow west and form the head waters of Gauley and Elk

~~The rivers, being named in the general view of the county.~~

~~The first cabin home-built within the limits of Edray District was that erected by Marlin and Sewell near the present site of Greenbrier Bridge in the 1749 and which was long known as Marlins Bottom now changed to Marlinton, the county seat of Pocahontas County. This settlement was as tho' it had not been. The first actual settlers who found what they were looking for - HOMES - were Thomas Drennin, Jacob Warwick, William Sharp, Robert Moore, John Johnson, Thomas Johnson, Robert Gay, William Poage, Patrick Slaterly, Robert Duffle, Thomas Brock, Lawrence Drennin and John Smith.~~

The first grist mill was built by Jonathan McNeill in the early part of 1800. It was located on Swago Creek, a short distance from its mouth.

Of those mentioned as the pioneers of the district, several were soldiers with General Lewis in the battle at Point Pleasant and among them were Thomas Drennin. He was the first settler on the land where Edray post office is located. Soon after he built his cabin home, it was attacked in his absence by the Indians, who killed his wife and a woman named Smith and carried his son into captivity. When Mr. Drennin returned home and beheld his home in ruins and his beloved wife still in death and thought of his son perhaps reserved for a worse fate, his heart failed within him but a few days later he repaired to Fort Union and volunteered in the army then concentrating. He accompanied it to Point Pleasant, participated in the battle and in the march beyond the Ohio.

At the close of the War he returned to his mountain home but there all ties for him were severed and he resolved to journey to the west and there, among savage tribes search for his beloved son. On the eve of his departure on his hazardous mission his neighbors gathered to bid him God-speed. Then with his rifle he pushed out into the wilderness. A long year passed away and there was no tidings of him for there were none to bring them and his friends believed that he had fallen a victim to savage cruelty, but not so; he had journeyed far to the north-west and found his son in the possession of a trader near Detroit, Mich. The homeward journey was begun and at last both reached home and lived long in what is now Pocahontas County. Drennins Ridge, now owned by Mrs. Alice Robertson, keeps ever in memory the name of the brave pioneer, Drennin.

Pella G. Geages

HISTORY OF DUNMORE COMMUNITY
(by Ella Pritchard)

Sometime between 1740 and 1750 the King of England sent a young man to America to survey for him. He surveyed and bought for his own a large boundary of land east of the Greenbrier River, west of the Allegheny Mountain. This brave Englishman was Lieut. Warwick. His boundary included all the land owned now by H.M. Moore, the Pritchards, McLaughlins and many other land owners who have bought off of these large farms.

Lieut. Warwick married Miss Elizabeth Dunlap, making his home at Dunmore, three miles east of the C&O Station, Sitlington, on the Greenbrier Division. Five miles west of the Virginia line, just north of the center of the county. Lieut. Warwick returned to England leaving his wife and little son Jacob, Lieut. Warwick died on this trip. His widow married Robert Setlington of Bath County, Virginia, making their home at Dunmore until Jacob Warwick, jr. was twenty-one years old. His mother had secured a deed for him covering all the land owned by his father, Lieut. Warwick.

Setlington's Creek was named for Robert Setlington.

In late years of the Seventeenth Century a fort was built near where the Dunmore postoffice now stands, for the protection of pioneer settlers against Indianraids. A covered walk was built from the fort to the creek so they could always get water in safety.

The Warwick property descended to Jacob Warwick's grandsons, Jacob and Andrew Mathews. Jacob Mathews owned the E. N. Moore place. After the death of his wife the land was sold to B. F. Jackson, who sold the property to E. A. Smith and from him it came into the possession of E. E. Moore. Andrew Mathews lived on the land now owned by the Pritchards

and H. N. Moore, and named it Mathewsville, and it is thought that he established a post office by that name.

Andrew Mathews sold to William Duncan and Isaac Moore. Both families occupied the house S. C. Pritchard replaced by a new house, and now the Pritchard homestead. Duncan and Moore combined their names and changed the name of the postoffice from Mathewsville to Dunmore. Later Duncan and Moore divided their purchase, Isaac Moore established a home in which H. M. Moore now lives. W. L. Duncan sold his land to John W. Warwick in 1855. In 1860 it was bought by John Andrew Warwick. He sold to Mr. Johnson of Warm Springs, Virginia. In 1873 S. C. Pritchard of Frederick County, Virginia exchanged a farm on Jackson River for the Johnson farm at Dunmore.

Some of the descendents of Lieut. Warwick who have been reared here are Mrs. S. B. Hannah, Mrs. H. E. Nixon, Mrs. Reece Pritchard, Mrs. Haven Deacon, Mrs. Joseph Lyons, Miss Maybelle Moore, and Merritt Moore. The only flour mill for a number of years was located at Dunmore and run by splendid water power, which never froze nor went dry, making it dependable. The older mill was run by what is called an overshot wheel. Later another mill was erected by Col. S. C. Pritchard, who used the turbine wheels for power which was an up-to-date rollermill was built by Winfred McElwee.

On the old water power location there was also an up and down saw-mill, also a carding machine which did splendid work, and a planing machine which made it a very business center.

The first stone building was built of logs. It still stands on the bank of the creek, and is owned by Fred Pritchard. First merchants who kept this store were Duncan & Co., Newton & George Wilson later kept store in the same building. After this Richard Jennings was in the mercantile business in a new and more up to date building on bank of Mill Race. This building was destroyed by fire few years ago.

set sail, the home gov.

*Calvin Price

William and Esq. Hugh McLaughlin bought about 1600 acres from Andrew Mathews, originally the Lieut. Warwick survey. This land takes in all the McLaughlin homes, including the Brooks, Corbett, and Wm. Deputy's farms. Wm. McLaughlin and his brother, Esq. Hugh of Marlins Bottom came to Pocahontas in 1829, from Jacksons River. Esq. Hugh and first William settled on the farm now owned by Jake McLaughlin.

John Carpenter, another old pioneer, settled on Thomas Creek. He divided his land among his four sons, William, John Jr., Hugh and Peter. This land is now the homes of Harry Taylor, James Watson and John Wm. Carpenter.

Near the mouth of Setlington Creek the land was owned by Ruben Lindsay and Jonathan Potts. The site where the town of Raywood now is, was originally owned by a colored family by the name of Diggs. They sold to Andrew Ratliff, who sold to George Ray. Same was purchased by the Warm Corporation and used for lumber yard and manufacturing town.

Thorny Creek was first settled by Martin Dilly, from Maryland, of Quaker descent, in 1820 and 1840 he located where his son Andrew lived; he being the father of Hanson and Amos Dilley, who resided on the old homestead. Rev. James Wanless one of the original settlers of Thorny Creek settled some time during the 20's at his death leaving his estate to his nephew, John F. Wanless.

Robert Dunlap McCutchan, January 11, 1825, married Elizabeth Youel Lockridge, of Goshen, Virginia and settled on Thomas Creek in 1825. While they are not pioneers; they came to Pocahaontas county soon after the organization of the county, virtually settled in the woods and built their home that was noted for and near for its good cheer and lavish hospitability. Mr. McCutchan purchased twenty-nine hundred acres of land which was likely a part of the Warwick Boundary.

William Nottingham of the Glade Hill neighborhood, married Mary Arbogast, daughter of Adam Arbogast, and settled in the woods. This is now one of our best farms, and is owned by Dr. Ligon Price, since the death of his parents, Mr & Mrs. J. C. Price, who having purchased the same from heirs of Adam Nottingham, who was a son of William Nottingham Jr. Mr. George Craig, father of the late Rev. Newton Craig, was the earliest settler at Glade Hill. A sad tragedy has impressed this fact. The colored nurse became angry when reproved by Mrs. Craig and as expression of her wrath she threw the baby girl on a large kettle of boiling water. This caused the death of the child. That the mother might forget this horrible scene, they sold the nurse to Col. Paul McNeel, son of John McNeel, the first permanent settler of Little Levels. While Miss Carrie Craig, was governess in Col. Paul McNeels' home she met and married John W. Warwick, who then owned the Andrew Mathews farm. She was his second wife. Issac Moore brought Glade Hill farm from Col. McNeel. E. N. Moore inherited this farm from his father, Isaac Moore. This farm has been sold again and divided into three which are owned by Charles Nottingham, James Wilfong and Charles Wilfong.

Benj. Arbogast one of the pioneers of the Buzzard neighborhood, built a brick house where Cornelius Buzzard now lives. It was in this home they held all their preaching services. The young folks their shoes in hand walked to Greenbank to Church on the Sabbath. On their return they attended Sunday School and prayer meeting which was conducted in John Sutton's barn. When they did all their shopping at Hot Spring, Virginia with only a narrow path just wide enough for a horse, we do not wonder that they made no more than four outings each year and treasured their shoes.

Ruben Buzzard next neighbor lived on the farm where Emery Shinabery
now lives. Their first church was built of logs after the Civil War.
It has since been replaced by a nice frame building.

Copied from the church records:

"Baxter Presbyterian Church built during the summer of 1858, dedicated
to the service of Almighty God, on the 27th day of August 1858, dedication
to the service by Rev. Charles C. M. See. Text 127 Psalm, part of the
first verse. By order of the Greenbrier Presbyterian this church was
organized by John C. Barr, 21st day of August, 1859, with sixteen members
from Liberty Church as follows: Robert D. McCutchan, Robery Curry, Ruling
Elders; Elizabeth McCutchan; Nancy McLaughlin; Samuel McCutchan, Christine
Jane McCutchan; Elizabeth Curry; Caroline Nottingham; Nancy McCutchan,
Matilda Craig; Caroline Warwick; John B. McCutchan; Robert R. McCutchen;
William McCutchan; Elizabeth E. McCutchan."

Pastors who have served the church: Rev. J. C. Barr; Rev. R. P. Kennedy
Rev. M. C. Dunlap; Rev. A. H. Hamilton; Rev. J. h. McCown; Rev. Wm. Price;
Rev. E. F. Alexander; Rev. R. M. Caldwell; Rev. H. W. McLaughlin; Rev.
R. T. Fultz; Re. Bain; Rev. J. S. Kennison, Rev. D. M. Monroe.

The seminary students who have endeared themselves by their faith-
ful service to many of God's people and helped many to become children
of His Kingdon, are ,Rev. J. V. McCall; Rev. A. D. Watkins; Rev. Lewis
Lancaster; now a missionary in China; Rev. Marion Sydenstricker, now a
missionary in Brazil.

This church has one outpost at McLaughlin school house which has
added many members to the church, two deacons, and established many
Christin homes,

The Church during the Civil War camped in this nice new church which had been so comfortably furnished, and left it a wreck for many years.

1890 and 1891 under the leadership of Rev. W. H. Ballengee the Methodist Episcopal Church, South was built. It was dedicated in August 1891, by Dr. J. W. Young. Trustees were William H. Cackley, Jacob Taylor, C. R. Moore and E. N. Moore. The Lewisburg District Conference met at this church at that time.

The first school at Dunmore was taught at the Chesley Moore House. The first school on the McLaughlin neighborhood was taught by Jacob C. McLaughlin, near present location. He was later called to war and killed at the battle of Cedar creek in 1864. The schoolhouse was destroyed, and one term of school was taught in an old house on what is known as the Carr place, where Ellitt Carpenter now lives. A school building of rough material was erected on the bank between the homes of Lawrence and Russell McLaughlin and school was in session at this point for about twenty years.

In the Dunmore Community are the following schools: Hillside, Buzzard, Thorny Creek, McLaughlin; Curry; and Dunmore. The Dunmore School was started in a one room building in the year of 1880. Miss Emma Warwick was the first teacher.

Dunmore is noted for its fine mineral springs. The Lithia Spring is gaining favor for its purity and the analysis shows this spring to be very similar to the famous Eureka Springs in Arkansas.

The valuable white pine invited many lumberman. The first railroad brought to Pocahontas county was located on Thomas Creek. The fat sleek horses bear the honor of the transportation of this railroad from Staunton, Virginia. A large portion of the lumber was floated out of Setlington Creek into the Greenbrier River and on to Ronceverte.

From the Pocahontas Times ***Feb. 3, 1927

...all, the home government reversed its policy and gave liberty of worship to its
...the price

Juanita S. Dilley
Clover Lick, W. Va.

Chapter 4 - Section 4

Feb. 16, 1940

POCAHONTAS COUNTY

* The settlers who came into Pocahontas from 1840 to 1860 were of the same type as the earlier ones with the exception of two small nationality groups. The Irish came during the potato famine in Ireland. Among the Irish who came were the Cloonans, Sullivans and Conways. Some Irish, of course, had come before this time. I can find no census of nationality groups and I believe none was kept, as the groups were not overly large, and they soon lost their racial integrity by intermarriage, or they moved on elsewhere and did not settle in nationality groups for long, if at all.*

THE DUTCH BOTTOM SETTLEMENT IN THE 1840's

The Reform church was established as the church of the Netherlands. Naturally there were many who protested against a move to mix the church and state. Pearl Buck in her book "The Exile" says there were 300 in the band in which her people sailed for America. They came to Pennsylvania to settle on land purchased by paper, but which turned out to be swamp land on which they could not even hope to exist. Many of them went back to the cities. About 100 of them came on south into what is now Pocahontas County.

The land in Pocahontas County was purchased from Paul McNeel by Rev. William Schimmerhorn of New York. This land was on the Williams River and the place was known as Dutch Bottom after its settlement. This land was a high, level, fertile plain, free of swamps. There were wild mountains all around them. Upon this land stood great forests. The Indians marched around them, though not hostile, they were terrifying to the Dutch. How strange and hard it was for these city-bred men and women, accustomed to the ease of a wealthy Dutch City, knowing nothing of farming and country life. Many of their number moved on again in those first two years, and in their third year the minister, who was their leader, died.

These hardships were the more hard to endure because within six months after they set sail, the home government reversed its policy and gave liberty of worship to its

Dutch Bottom Settlement - cont'd

citizens.

During the winter of 1858 this small company of about 60 persons disbanded. Crops had not been good, and the men realizing they knew so little about farming, and their inability to endure the hardships of pioneer life in Pocahontas, wanted to move to some town to go into some business there.

Among those who remained in Pocahontas were the Stultings (Pearl Bucks grandparents) and the Van Reenans, of which there are many in the county today.

The Stultings built their new house on the edge of the English settlement of Hillsboro in Little Levels.

Most of the Van Reenans today live on the Story Creek section of the County in Edray District.

From - The Exile - Buck

Pocahontas Times - April 27, 1939

History of Poca. - Price

During these two decades 1840 - 1860 we did not get so many settlers as the west was being settled at that time and people passed on over going farther west. So many of our own people, especially from Little Levels, also moved on. There are so many McNeels, Beards, Callisons, Poages, Hills, Gays, Bridgers and Clunens from Pocahontas in one county in Missouri that it was often called "Little Virginia". Others also went to Ohio and Indiana. In 1840 the population of Pocahontas was 2,922 and in 1860 only 3,958 an increase of only 1,036 persons.

Calvin Price

History of Poca. - Price

The upper part of the County had been mostly populated by the Germans and French, and the lower part of the county primarily by the Scotch - Irish. While the German names are still dominant in upper Poca, and the Scotch - Irish names in lower Poca, yet they have intermarried and did not long remain separate nationality groups.

During this period 1810 to 1860 farms in the county increased in number, but decreased in size. The original land holders who had owned, sometimes, thousands of acres began to divide them among their heirs, or to sell off portions of their vast estate. Mrs. L. M. Coyner here at Clover Lick tells me that her people, the Warwicks, lost a lot of their land by going on bonds or notes, and that the land was sold sometimes for as little as 50 cents per acre. This was, perhaps true of many of the land owners of the county. For in going through their wills and the settlement of their estates, I found that many of them were on notes and bonds.*

*After these large farms or plantations were divided the average farm was from 200 acres to 1000 acres. They are still being divided yet today, until only one the Hevener estate in Greenbank District remains undivided. Many of the estates have passed completely out of the hands of the heirs of the original owners.

These people, of course, traded with each other to some extent. Bartering was done in Pocahontas as elsewhere. Work, however, was the one thing they traded most with each other, for work was the one thing needed most to turn the wilderness into farms and to erect their log houses. When a man had a house to build or a field to be cleared, all the neighbors helped him and he in turn helped them. "Log rollings" and "house raisings" got much work done and also gave a chance for social contact not only for the men but for the women who got together and prepared the feast. Then there were the "husking bees" and "quilting parties", all of which probably ended up in a dance that night. Work not exchanged was paid for with produce instead of money. (These will be taken up more in Chapter 5)

Their cattle, horses and sheep were sold to Lancaster, Pa., to Philadelphia, Baltimore, Richmond, Staunton and Winchester. Richmond especially was an excellent market for horses. The settlers would load up their pack horses with furs, hides, dried deer meat called deer saddle, a little leather, some few persons took a small amount of tobacco. They would go across the mountain, sell, or exchange their goods for lead, a little sugar and a little cloth, though most of the cloth was made at home. Their pack horses were also sold.